UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

Birth Control Number

A Plea for Birth Control - *John Haynes Holmes*

The 1935 Birth Control Conference - - - - - - *Stella Hanau*

Birth Control and the Depression - - - - *Mrs. F. Robertson Jones*

Birth Control Downward—and Upward - - - - *Henry Pratt Fairchild*

The Church and Birth Control - *Curtis W. Reese*

Present Birth Control Laws and Proposed Amendment

Reasons for Amending Existing Birth Control Laws - - - *Margaret Sanger*

Religion and Human Sterilization - - - - - - *Louis L. Mann*

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The Field

"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."

The Paradox of Birth Control

Did you know that the Senate had passed the birth-control bill? It did —for five minutes, while Pat McCarran, the Catholic Senator from Nevada, was taking a nap. When he woke up he demanded a reconsideration of the vote, which meant that the Senators would have had to go on record, for and against. This they were unwilling to do, so Mrs. Sanger's bill, which had been favorably reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee, was once more put to sleep.

But did you know that the Catholic Church had come out for birth control? It has. Why, then, did Senator McCarran oppose the bill? Because the Catholic version of birth control is not Mrs. Sanger's version. The Catholic version, while letting down the moral bars to the practice of birth control, still prohibits the use of contraceptives.

Quite recently there appeared two little Catholic books, "The Rhythm" and "The Sterile Period in Family Life," in which women are told how they may have sexual intercourse without having a baby. One of these books is published with "ecclesiastical approbation" and the other with the "Imprimatur" of Patrick Cardinal Hayes. They are permitted to circulate freely through the mails by the Post Office Department, although Postmaster General Farley is a Roman Catholic. Under the birth-control bill, if passed, only physicians would be permitted to circulate such literature. But Mr. Farley's office goes the limit by permitting the birth-control method approved by Rome to be sent by laymen to laymen, regardless of sex, age, or marital condition. With the appearance of these two books, practically every argument of the Roman Church against birth control falls flat. What happens to the Catholic argument that knowledge of contraception will endanger the morals of the unmarried, when Catholics themselves are spreading wholesale a method of birth control which is sold over the counter or sent through the mails to anyone? The approved Papal method requires only a simple knowledge of the so-called sterile period in the menstrual

(*Continued on page* 239)

UNITY

"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"

Volume CXIV MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1935 Number 12

A CREED

The creed of the sincere and quiet soul need be but a very simple one to comprehend much,—all that is needed. I believe in the constant, yearning aspiration of the soul toward that great unknown good whom I call God. I believe in the right of every human being to enjoy all that I enjoy, and it is my work in life to see that he is at least offered the chance so to enjoy if he will.

—*Pearl S. Buck*, in "What Religion Means to Me."

The Saar Valley of course belongs to Germany, and never should have been taken away from her. This raping of the Valley by the so-called peace-makers of Versailles was one of the most discreditable features of the famous Treaty, and assuredly one of the many causes of the coming of Adolph Hitler for which the Allies and the United States are responsible. Justice, therefore, was done by the plebiscite which by a majority vote of 90 per cent returned the Valley to the Reich. But Justice garbed in terror, armed in hate, and envenomed for revenge! If anything could reveal the real nature of the tragedy which has befallen Germany, and also the world, it is the circumstances which attended the recovery of the Saar by decision of the inhabitants. That every condition of violence and fear was thrown about the balloting is shown by the fact that an international army had to be posted in the territory to preserve the peace and to guarantee an honest vote. No sooner was the vote cast and counted than the exodus began—that pitiful and outrageous exodus which is the measure of Nazi cruelty. Ten thousand Jews have fled, as they fled years ago the Black Hundreds of the Tsar, and, thanks to France, find refuge within friendly borders. Along with these are going other thousands who have been active in opposing the return of the Saar to Hitler's Reich, including many Catholics, priests and laity, who with magnificent courage have dared to defy the dictatorship. It all makes a ghastly spectacle, to find a parallel to which one must return to the dark days of Russia and Turkey, or to the Dark Ages themselves. Incidental factors in the decision have incidental interest. Thus, the Saar victory must add prestige to Hitler's rule, which was badly damaged in the Austrian affair. This makes matters worse! Also, the lancing of the Saar boil means an easement in the diplomatic relations between Germany and France. This makes matters better! But the essential factor remains—Nazi savagery at the heart of Europe, vexing humanity with horror and dismay!

Huey Long aggravates us—and also alarms us! He aggravates us because his blatherskite attacks upon the President make impossible any reasonable criticism by reasonable men. If there is anything that we deem unwholesome it is the adulation of Mr. Roosevelt which has held this nation in a kind of hypnotic trance for nearly two years now. We regard such adulation as equivalent to a suspension or paralysis of the due functioning of democracy, for if there is any one thing more than another essential to free government, it is active and alert criticism of the ruling powers. The President is not infallible, nor his policies wholly wise; for his own good, to say nothing of the country's good, he should be adjudged fairly yet sternly on his record. But with the Kingfish pouring his vulgar slime upon the nation's head, what one of us all will speak? To criticize the President for any sound reason inevitably aligns the critic at the present moment with the Louisiana Senator, and this is of course intolerable to any decent man. But Huey Long not only aggravates us—he alarms us as well! If ever there was a specimen of sheer demagogery, it is the "share-the-wealth" program which Long is now commending to the country as the platform of his 1936 candidacy for the presidency. With all the out-and-out quackery of the Townsend Plan, this program combines many of the features of reform which have been advocated by intelligent social radicals these many years. In a way, Huey Long is stealing the clothes of the Socialists, while they are bathing in the troubled waters of internal dissension, and using them for costumes in his individual circus act. The real nature of this act is shown us in Louisiana, where we see the political methods which the Senator would employ to put his program into effect. This, of course, is Fascism of the plainest type. Huey Long is a highly ridiculous figure, and we used to laugh at him. But the Germans used to laugh at Hitler—and see what happened!

It is a relief to turn away from Townsend plans and Huey Long programs to the social legislation proposed by the President for unemployment insurance and old-age pensions. There may be criticisms to be made of certain details of Mr. Roosevelt's scheme—we think Senator Borah is right, for example, in his observation that all the payments are too low. But the important

thing at this moment is not the details but the general principle and program, and here there can be nothing but praise for the administration. The President's message to Congress is constructive, progressive, enlightened—statesmanship of the highest order. It supersedes everything that has been done by Washington thus far, making an end we trust for good and all to the impossible NRA and PWA and other alphabetical experiments which have only served to delay recovery and to make reconstruction impossible. There is something of tragedy in the delay of this social justice program—that it should not have appeared in 1933 instead of now in 1935. But this delay of the administration is nothing as compared with the delay of the nation in recognizing the necessity for governmental action of this sort. Germany enacted her unemployment, old age, and health insurance measures more than a generation ago. Britain took action, under Lloyd-George's leadership, before the War. Here in America we lived in the fool's paradise of refusing to believe that any such reforms were necessary with us. We were different from other peoples—our country had solved the problem of prosperity—God was with us! But now we find we are in the same boat with the rest of the capitalistic world, and must join in the work of stopping up the leaks. It has been a wholesome lesson —well worth, perhaps, all the losses and sufferings of these past years. To Mr. Roosevelt must now go the credit of leading the way, and of thus bringing the nation belatedly into line with such civilization as we have.

There is no question that the Supreme Court has put the fear of the Constitution, if not of God, into this cocky administration of ours. Quite apart from all specific political and economic issues involved, we count this a good thing, for we believe that the Roosevelt group had been left free long enough to do anything and everything it entered into their heads to do, and call it right because they did it. For more than a year, now, the administration has derided and denounced any man who dared to question the perfect wisdom of the White House. The two tables of the Law as received from Sinai never had such sanctity as the NRA as handed down from Washington. The Congress must do what Roosevelt said, because he said it, even passing bills without reading them. The people must kow-tow as in the presence of the Son of Heaven, and praise God for manna from the Democratic skies. As for the Supreme Court, it must get out of the way! Well, the months have passed, and the Supreme Court is not going to get out of the way. On the contrary, it is going to continue to function as a coordinate branch of government, and have its say as to what's been going on these delirious days. The "hot oil" law, first to appear before the august tribunal, is thrown out with a thump which shook the capital. What was amazing in this case was the 8-to-1 vote on the issue, three of the four famous liberals plus the Chief Justice lining up with the conservatives. If that wasn't ominous for the rest of the New Deal legislation, we can't imagine what would be. Then came the gold question, now reposing on the laps of the nine justices. Under the stern questioning of the Court, the Attorney General took ignominious flight, abandoned all argument for the issue in question, and like a whimpering child pleaded with the Court not to precipitate the administration into the pit of chaos which the administration had itself deliberately dug for itself and for the nation. What will happen in this case, no man can forecast; but let this be said: If trouble comes, nobody is responsible but the President who made a nation's credit the plaything of financial whim and fancy.

We have long since gotten over taking Mr. Hearst very seriously. The days when he could put over a Spanish War for newspaper profit have long since gone. In recent years, his record of journalistic flops must constitute something like a record indeed. So we haven't been able to get much excited over this latest campaign of his to create a "red" scare in this country, and to slaughter academic freedom upon the altar of popular 'phobia. Not only is Mr. Hearst's power largely a legend of other days, but also in this case it is decidedly too late for a "red" scare. It isn't the Communists we have to be afraid of today, but rather the Fascists, more particularly demagogues of the Father Coughlin, Huey Long, and Dr. Townsend variety. Mr. Hearst is aiming his poisoned arrows at the wrong target. But none the less we are glad that outraged public sentiment is arousing itself against Mr. Hearst, since his methods in this latest crusade have been characteristically wicked, and his undercover attack upon the colleges a peculiarly vicious trick. In the guise of prospective university students, he has sent reporters to professors whom he proposed to "get," and has thus planted upon distinguished liberal scholars at Syracuse University and Teachers College, New York, lying charges which strike at the very heart of the American tradition of free speech and free press. This is dastardly business, well met now by the petition of a remarkable group of American educators (headed by John Dewey and Charles A. Beard) addressed to the McCormick-Dickstein Congressional Committee on un-American Activities, requesting an investigation of the "campaign of terrorism against teachers in American colleges, universities, schools, and even private schools." It looks as though Mr. Hearst's "Communist exposé" was going to turn into a first-class boomerang! It is to be hoped that the Congressional Committee will take speedy action, and end Mr. Hearst for good and all by showing the kind of disreputable busi-

ness his papers engage in. Incidentally, it might be well for the newly organized Guild of newspaper writers to raise the question of the ethics of journalists working for Mr. Hearst.

Income taxes are to be made public this year, and nobody is complaining at all. It wasn't so long ago that anguish rent the veil of heaven when returns were published, and an outraged Congress responded to the loud outcries of an agonized nation by shutting up the figures in secret once again. But times have changed; the sanctity of the individual life is not what it used to be; and, finally, we haven't got the money we used to have. In the old days we were rotten with money—piling up such fabulous fortunes that even the most shameless among us were not any too eager to have the facts of our debauchery known. But now we are all poor, and proud to be poor, and so not at all disturbed at letting the facts be known. Who cares, since snoopers will get meagre returns for their silly pains? As a matter of fact, the whole outcry over the publicity of income tax returns was silly and insincere. Every other tax is public—why shouldn't this be public, also? The tax on a man's house, on his automobile, on his personal property—his water tax, his poll tax, his inheritance tax—the tax on public utilities, on corporation earnings—they are all known. And so, as a matter of fact, is a man's income known. Not in exact figures, perhaps, but definitely in those gradations which divide men into economic classes as precise as any social classes ever known to history! If there was any reason for opposition, it lay in the fact that income tax returns cannot be quite as easily and flagrantly dishonest under conditions of publicity as of privacy. That most persons cheat as brazenly at the income tax office as at the customs house office, we have always believed. Most Americans are dishonest if they think they can get away with it, and income tax returns sealed as well as signed give a beautiful chance for evasion. Also, collusion between government and its rich patrons was at a maximum under conditions of secrecy, and now will be reduced to a minimum. So we are glad the books are open!

Reverberations from Boston indicate that a full-sized eruption is on among the Unitarians. Appointment of the Survey Commission has released all kinds of hidden fires, and explosions are heard on every side. Newspaper comment has described the investigation now under way as an attack upon the administration of the American Unitarian Association on charges of "inefficiency, ineptitude and inertia." This interpretation has been strenuously denied. Certain it is, however, that the marked decline of the Unitarian movement in the nation at large through recent years is being sharply contrasted with the huge expenses for official headquarters in Boston. Unitarian churches declined in number, during the ten-year period of 1916 to 1926, from 411 to 353. Boston, the Mecca of the faith, has doubled its population in thirty years, yet Unitarian churches in the Hub have added to their number only two. Contributions to the A. U. A. last year amounted to only $25,139.27, an average of about one cent per week per member. From 111 churches less than $10 each was received. On the other side are the big expenditures of the national organization—$48,809.05 for salaries of officers, more than $100,000 to maintain the headquarters staff and building. The Unitarian body is rotting at the top, we are told, and dying in the extremities. The situation is certainly disquieting. But we believe the critics are fundamentally wrong in what seems to be their assumption that the plight of the Unitarians is a thing unique among the churches of America. Much is made of the alleged fact, for example, that while Unitarian membership was declining 22,000, from 82,000 to 60,000, church membership in the country showed a gain of 12,000,000; and that while Unitarian churches were declining from 411 to 353, other sects showed an increase of 5,436. Such contrast, we believe, is untrue. These statistics of enormous gains outside the Unitarian ranks are utterly fallacious. As a hard, cold matter of fact, Protestantism in our time has entered upon a universal decline, of which the Unitarian decline is only a single phase. Administration at 25 Beacon Street may be efficient or inefficient, but in either case is of no concern. What is happening is that we are in the midst of a revolution which is slowly but surely wiping out middle-class capitalism, and Protestantism, which is the religion of the middle class, with it. We are witnessing the end of an era, religious as well as economic, political, and social. It would be strange if Unitarianism was not among the first to show the signs of disintegration. The appointment of the Survey Commission is an excellent thing, but let it not make the mistake of assuming that it is studying any isolated phenomenon.

Jottings

"An estimated attendance of 9,400 compared favorably with the 10,870 at the start last year."—*Newspaper report.*

We wonder what the attendance would have to have been to compare *unfavorably* with last year!

Norman H. Davis, when he returned from London recently, declared that the late London naval conference "was neither a success nor a failure." Yet this conference failed to accomplish the purposes for which

it was called! When is a failure not a failure? When a professional optimist has to make out a case.

Huey Long says that if the country doesn't accept his "share-the-wealth" program, it will get him as President in 1936. On the other hand, he says that, if his program is accepted, he will straightway retire to private life. These are the two best and only convincing arguments that we have seen for the "share-the-wealth" idea.

In a recent college debate we are told in an Associated Press dispatch,

The co-eds argued the negative of the question, "Resolved: That honesty is the best policy." The audience and judges gave them a big vote of approval.

We have heard a good deal about the New Morality. Here it is!

We rather guess the solution of the unemployment problem has at last been found. Thus, we note the following advertisement in the New York newspapers:

Daily Dog Walking Service, Inc. A service for dog owners, $5 a month up. 17 Broadway. TRafalgar-7-5727.

UNITY has for years been jeering at church statistics. Hence our satisfaction at finding that recent and authoritative volume, "Catholics, Jews and Protestants," edited by Claris Edwin Silcox and Galen M. Fisher, refusing to trust them. It declares such statistics to be "incomplete and inaccurate," and quotes Walter Bagehot's famous statement that "there are lies, damned lies, and *church statistics.*" J. H. H.

A Plea for Birth Control

Man's desperate task in this age is that of keeping the house of our world from tumbling into ruin. We only have one house to live in, after all—"this goodly frame, the earth," on which the nations of men must live together whether they will or no. This common house in recent years has been shaken as though by an earthquake, and we are now attempting to rebuild it so that it may stand the shocks of fortune. Suppose that we succeed! Imagine that we are able to draw blue prints of justice which may give us the pattern for our ideal home! Will this solve our social problem? Will our difficulties and dangers all be conquered? Does there not remain one final problem, untouched by any plan for the future, which may wreck us in the end, however well the planning may be done?

What we have in mind is the question as to the capacity of this common earth, our home, to furnish accommodations indefinitely for its residents. What about this home becoming overcrowded? How could we live, even survive, if congestion began to press upon us?

It is this question which brings us face to face with the tremendous enigma of population. Let us assume for the sake of argument that the land has been freed, the machine socialized, production for private profit eliminated, and all weath at last made common wealth. But humanity is all the time growing, increasing, multiplying! Meanwhile, the earth is just so large and no larger. The amount of land available for occupation and cultivation cannot be expanded. The amount of wealth produced for sustenance can never be extended beyond a certain measurable total. Recent enormous increases in the productive capacity of man have tended to obscure the dreadful truth that in economics, exactly as in mechanics, there is a law of diminishing returns, while the law of reproduction still remains the good old Biblical injunction, "increase and multiply." For our present population the problem of production has been definitely solved. For the first time in history the race is living on a basis of surplus and not of deficit. But what if this population keeps on doubling and redoubling? What if more and more cultivated land has to be passed over for purposes of sheer occupancy? What if the instinct of reproduction brings defeat to the science of production?

Statistics on these points are impressive. Take those submitted in an authoritative text-book on the subject, Professor East's well-known volume, "Mankind at the Cross Roads"! In the year 1800 there were 800,000,000 people living in the world. Just one hundred years later, in 1900, this number had been exactly doubled. At the present rate of increase, the population of the globe will double every sixty years. This means that, in the year 2000 the earth will contain no less than 3,500,000,000 people; and a thousand years later, in the year 3000, a terrifying total of 34,000,000,000 people. As the earth, exclusive of the Arctic regions, has only some 33,000,000,000 acres of land, this means that in 3000 A. D., there will be one person per single acre of land. But "a reasonable maximum for the world's future population is one person for each 2.5 acres in 40 per cent of the land area of the globe," says Professor East. "This gives a figure of 5,200,000,000, a population which at the present rate of increase would be reached in just a little over a century."

That this "present rate of increase" is no joke is indicated by the experience of a single country, Japan. In the island empire of the Mikado, the population has already reached a saturation point. There is no more land for cultivation. Yet at the present moment the people of Japan are increasing at the rate of 900,000 every year. And there are persons who are actually

wondering at what is going on today in Manchuria and Mongolia! Nor is Japan the only offender. Look at Italy, where Mussolini is urging mothers to have ever larger families, and Germany, where Hitler is setting women to the stern task of breeding warriors. "People who do not consult the census returns," says the famous explorer, V. Stefansson, an expert authority on this subject, "are in the habit of laughing at the Malthusian doctrine of population. But those who look at the census returns do not laugh."

It is these facts which confront us with the challenge of one of the basic reforms of our time—namely, birth control. This reform is associated with many distinguished names, as those of Emma Goldman, Maria Stopes, Mary Ware Dennett, Havelock Ellis, and Bertrand Russell; but with none so distinguished and immortal as that of Margaret Sanger, unquestionably one of the greatest women of our time, and one of the great women of all time. It is interesting to trace the development of Mrs. Sanger's thought, from the time when she was a young nurse working among the poor, to this present hour when she is one of the outstanding leaders of world opinion. In the beginning, Mrs. Sanger was impressed by the plight of individual mothers who, for reasons of health, or poverty, or family circumstances, could not afford to have more children. It was the desire to free the housewife of the tenements from the intolerable burden of child-bearing which induced this heroic woman to launch her crusade for the deliverance of motherhood from bondage. Then, as she continued her work, Mrs. Sanger's gaze began to look up and out. She began to understand that the question of reproduction was not merely an individual but a social problem as well. She made the astounding discovery that not only the single mother but the nation, the race, could not afford to multiply indefinitely. For the good of us all this ceaseless breeding must be controlled. So that now we face this fundamental reform to which all enlightened men and women are committed—namely, birth control. In this momentous hour of human history we are moving into a new age of what is known as "planned economy." Production must be adapted to population, and population to production. Which means that we must straightway establish birth control as the judgment of public conscience and the criterion of public action, that the family of mankind may not outgrow the house which it must occupy.

The right of man thus to control his life, to plan reproduction as well as production, would seem to be indubitable. Yet there are those who question it! But why should man's mastery of life be denied in this one field of human generation, when it is granted and glorified in all others? If any one thing more than another distinguishes man from the animal, it is his mastery of nature and of her processes. The animal is the helpless victim of the cosmos, but man is more and more proving himself to be the master of this cosmos. H. G. Wells, in the closing chapters of his "The Outline of History," conceives of a time when man will reach out his hands among the stars, and control their passage through the vast empyrean of space. Why not? And if man is thus destined to control and subdue to his own purposes all natural processes without, why not as well all natural processes within?

Man is the child of God, because, like God, he is himself a creator. But in this work of creation it is not intended that he should spawn like the fish of the sea, nor breed like the beasts of the jungle, but "increase and multiply" as a spiritual being. Man, in other words, is spirit and not flesh, if he be truly man; and it is spirit, therefore, that must control and use the flesh if man's highest destiny is to be fulfilled. It is this truth which constitutes the spiritual aspect of birth control, and thus the ethical justification of man's practice of this reform. We have come to regard birth control as the final test of man's higher mastery of his own life. It is one more instance of God intelligently and beautifully at work in the conscious process of his own creation.

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

The Present Federal Birth Control Laws

1. Section 211 of the U. S. Penal Code . . . Prohibits sending or receiving by or from the U. S. mails information or supplies pertaining to the prevention of conception. *There are no exemptions.*

2. Section 245 of the U. S. Penal Code . . . Also prohibits sending or receiving, by or from, an express company or other common carrier information or supplies pertaining to the prevention of conception. *There are no exemptions.*

3. Sections 311 and 312 affect the territories and districts of the U. S. and are even more rigid in their prohibition, as they forbid even the *possession* of any article intended for the prevention of conception. *There are no exemptions.*

Violations of these laws are subject to $2,000 or $5,000 fine or imprisonment for five years; or both.

The Proposed Birth Control Amendment

Senate Bill 600 and House Bill 2000, 74th Congress, 1st session. Introduced in the Senate by Senator S. Mills Hastings of Delaware, and in the House of Representatives by Representative Pierce of Oregon.

[A Bill similar to this one passed the Senate unanimously June 13, 1934, but was recalled by Senator McCarren of Nevada.]

A Bill

To amend sections 211, 245 and 312 of the Criminal Code, as amended.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That sections 211, 245, and 312 of the Criminal Code, as amended, are each amended by adding at the end thereof the following:

"The provisions of this section shall not be construed to apply to any book or information relating to the prevention of conception, or article, instrument, substance, drug, medicine, or thing designed, adapted, or intended for the prevention of conception for use (1) by any physician legally licensed to practice medicine in any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia, or by his direction or prescription; (2) by any druggist in filling any prescription of a licensed physician; (3) by any medical college legally chartered under the laws of any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia; or (4) by any hospital or clinic licensed in any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia, except in any State in which such use is prohibited by the law thereof."

Important Reasons for Amending Existing Birth Control Laws

(1) Federal Laws passed in 1873, class birth control with *obscenity.* This stigma should be removed from a subject affecting public health.

(2) Federal laws conflict with State laws. Doctors are confused as to the legal status of the subject. Physicians fear giving contraceptive advice. Study and medical research are hampered.

(3) Physicians legally giving advice in their States are forced to "bootleg" their contraceptive supplies and scientific information, for Federal Laws forbid using U. S. mails or common carriers to obtain or send contraceptive information or supplies. Physicians may choose to violate Federal Laws in private practice; *but* they cannot do so in hospitals, dispensaries, etc., lest the charters and endowments of such institutions be revoked. Consequently, poor women are unable to obtain this knowledge.

(4) Commercial agencies masquerade under misleading names—exploiting the needs of these women.

(5) Federal laws make it illegal to send the *address* of birth control clinics (legally operating under State laws) to overburdened mothers seeking help.

(6) The medical organizations most familiar with this subject have gone on record in favor of amending these laws:

The American Gynecological Society (1925); Section of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Abdominal Surgery of the American Medical Association; The Medical Women's National Association; National Committee on Maternal Health, Inc.

(7) Increased knowledge of contraception would mean a reduction in the number of criminal abortions. Over 15,000 women each year die from this cause alone.

(8) *Lastly:* During this period of economic distress and unemployment, wives and mothers should be able to obtain through responsible medical channels, this form of constructive relief.

—*Margaret Sanger.*

The 1935 Birth Control Conference

"The mind of the public must be so educated that sex and all that pertains thereto can be thought and spoken of with the frankness that now prevails in the fields of dietetics and aesthetics or ethics and religion."

With these words Curtis W. Reese, Dean of the Abraham Lincoln Centre, sounded the keynote of the Birth Control Conference held in Chicago on January 16th and 17th. Other cords were struck and other themes were played. Plans for the future, historical background, defeats and victories, practical queries, methods of procedure, doubts, high hopes and inspiration found their place in the meetings held by the American Birth Control League in cooperation with the Illinois Birth Control League. But all the data brought together by the assembled delegates, the speeches, questions and discussions, showed clearly that a change in attitude is fundamental and that until we can educate the public the birth control movement will continue to find opposition and the birth control problem will be confused and tangled.

The occasion for the Conference was the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the American Birth Control League. The League points with pride to its eighteen affiliated State Leagues, and to over 150 birth control clinics, many founded and maintained by its state organizations. As the reports were made, as problems of administration were discussed and ideas interchanged, a picture of the birth control situation in America today became clear. In eighteen states, and numerous local communities as yet not officially organized, men and women of vision and devotion, ministers, doctors, social workers, and nurses see the need for birth control and are trying to fill that need.

The immediate and practical problem of a quarter of a million babies born to mothers on federal relief in one year was brought up at the opening session. The following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Whereas, the cost of public relief in the United States is now over 125 million dollars a month, and

Whereas, scientific research has shown that families on relief have about 50% more children than similar families not on relief, and

Whereas, these children add to the burdens both of their already over-burdened parents, and of the taxpayers', now

Therefore, be it resolved that the American Birth Control League unite with the American Eugenics Society in formulating and securing the adoption of the most effective plans for providing that as a matter of routine, all families on relief shall be informed where they may best obtain medical advice

in a strictly legal fashion as to the limitation of families by methods in accordance with their religious convictions.

An account of birth control work in 1934, state by state, followed. Space forbids a detailed resume, but the following jottings will give some idea of the tremendous enthusiasm, the painstaking effort, what has been accomplished and what must still be done.

Readers of UNITY, will perhaps be most interested in the Illinois situation. The *Illinois* League sponsors six clinics—at League Headquarters, 203 North Wabash Avenue, at 347 North Lincoln Street, at the House of Social Service, 734 West 47th Street, at the Jewish Peoples Institute, 3500 Douglas Boulevard, at Hull House, and the Chicago Heights Clinic, at 220 East 15th Street. In addition there is birth control service at the Maternity Guidance Clinic at the Lying-In Hospital, Chicago, at the Illinois Social Hygiene League, Chicago, at 802 Main Street, Evanston, and at the Family Relations Bureau, 3002 South Adams Street, Peoria. During the past year the Illinois Birth Control League cared for 2,206 patients. Of these, 643 were unable to pay.

In *Delaware,* 800 women were cared for at the Wilmington Clinic. The League has an Advisory Council, made up of representatives from leading welfare organizations such as the State Board of Health, the Delaware Commission for Feeble Minded, the Delaware Anti-Tuberculosis Association. In *Indiana,* patients are referred to the Indianapolis Clinic from the Juvenile Court, from the Family Welfare Society and from the Public Health Association. *Kentucky* reports that one-half its Louisville Clinic patients are on relief rolls. *Maine's* account of the founding of its Clinic shows how uphill is the road and how gallant the struggle. With the support of the President of the Maine Medical Association, the League first attempted to open a clinic in the Maine General Hospital but were defeated by the directors on the grounds that birth control is a controversial subject. The League next rented three rooms in the Community Chest Building of Portland, but were unable to open a clinic there since Community Chest funds were threatened by this activity. "The District Nurses Association," the report goes on to say, "from whom we had expected to get many patients, was threatened with a very considerable loss of support unless they severed connection with us. So although the majority of the Board and all the nurses felt that there was need of a birth control service, they had to take the expedient course and agree not to send patients to us officially." The Portland Clinic was finally opened independently and is running to capacity. Three rural clinics have also been established.

There are twenty clinics in *Pennsylvania,* and 4,000 patients have been cared for. *Rhode Island* has two clinics. Thirty-two percent of its patients are on Public Relief and 50 percent are advised free. *New Jersey* has cared for 9,000 patients at its Newark Center. The State is organized by counties and there are four clinics. Referral of patients is by the Church Missions, the family welfare organizations, the Red Cross, the Relief Administration and the Y. W. C. A. In *New York State,* there are ten Mothers Health Centers housed in welfare centers—a procedure which might well be followed in other large cities. Ten counties are organized and have established clinical service.

The following items taken by permission from the delegate's notebook, show how constructive the Conference was and in how practical a way the workers plan to put new ideas into operation:

Use Relief Resolution as the basis for approaching state relief workers.

Issue pamphlet for social workers similar to that used in Pennsylvania.

Campaign of education for Board Members of social agencies.

Approach state divisions of national organizations which have endorsed birth control such as Y. W. C. A., Federation of Women's Clubs, Unitarian Ministers.

Over 300 people gathered for the luncheon meeting on the second day. Professor Paul Douglas, of the University of Chicago, presided and Mrs. F. Robertson Jones, Professor Henry Pratt Fairchild, and Dr. Curtis W. Reese, spoke. The resolution urging birth control for families on relief was read and adopted by this larger public meeting and Margaret Sanger's work for the amendment of the Federal law and her plans for a petition to the President, described more fully elsewhere in this issue, were announced. [Abstracts of the luncheon addresses by Mrs. Jones, Professor Fairchild, and Dr. Reese are published elsewhere in this issue of UNITY].

A special evening session was held at the Wabash Y. W. C. A. at which Dr. Carl G. Roberts, senior surgeon at Provident Hospital, and former president of the National Medical Association, presided, addresses were delivered by Dr. Yarros, Dr. Eric M. Matsner, and Dr. M. O. Bousfield.

Round tables on field work, clinic procedure and publicity, and a tour of Chicago clinics were part of the program. While the actual discussions do not fall within the scope of this article, the kind of problems which confront the workers will interest the general reader. Here are some of the topics discussed: the safe period; follow-up work; fees; volunteers; field work; is the propaganda phase of the movement over; how can the support of social workers be secured, of ministers, of physicians?

A Physicians Conference at which eminent specialists whose very names lend prestige to the subject, spoke, closed the two day conference. Among the participants were: Dr. Fred L. Adair, Dr. Nathan S. Davis III, Dr. Charles Sumner Bacon, Dr. Irving F. Stein, Dr. N. Sproat Heaney, Dr. John Favill, Dr. Rachelle S. Yarros, Dr. Frederick H. Falls, all of Chicago, Dr. Alexander M. Campbell of Michigan, and Dr. Eric M. Matsner of New York. That birth control is the physicians' responsibility was clearly brought out. Also that scientific birth control is reliable. But all physicians do not know about birth control, nor is it taught in all medical schools . . . because the medical profession has been afraid of this subject, and has felt that it is "improper."

Thus we return to the main theme, the very core of the problem. What is needed is a change of attitude. To this end the Chicago Conference, the support of the press and the hospitality of these pages is a great step forward.

STELLA HANAU.*

*Mrs. Hanau is Publication Director of the American Birth Control League and Editor of the Birth Control Review.

[Report of the Birth Control Conference to be held in Washington on February 12th has been arranged for and will appear in a later issue.—Ed.]

Birth Control and the Depression

A survey of birth control during the depression shows a paradoxical state of affairs. The means of family limitation have apparently been within easy reach of everyone; and yet hundreds of thousands of women have given birth to unwanted babies, and hundreds of thousands more have been able to avoid that tragedy only by resorting to abortion.

This statement is no exaggeration. The country has been flooded with contraceptive materials. Over three hundred firms are engaged in their manufacture. The president of one of these firms testified in court that its output ran to over twenty million a year. They are sold in every town and village—in drug stores, by peddlers, by slot machines, by mail. Anyone can buy them anywhere. And according to the advertisements, they are infallible. Then, besides these commercial contraceptives, there is a free-for-all method, directions for which Roman Catholic leaders have broadcast during 1934, in an inexpensive form, so that (as they explain) "it might be accessible to all people to whom the regulation of births is a problem."

With the Roman Catholic Church and the manufacturers of contraceptive supplies both so industriously disseminating knowledge of birth control methods and materials, the tragedy of the unwanted child should surely be a thing of the past, one would think; every woman should be able to avoid undesired pregnancy.

But nothing could be further from the truth. As every relief worker knows to his despair, unwanted children have been arriving thick and fast in the homes of the unemployed. The census of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration reports that over a quarter of a million babies were born into families on relief in one year. Other investigators tell the same tragic story of unwanted children adding to the burden of already overburdened parents. Even more tragic than the high birth rate among the poor has been the prevalence of abortion.

What accounts for this extraordinary inconsistency—birth control information and birth control materials everywhere available, but hundreds of thousands of poor women unable to avoid dreaded disastrous pregnancy? The birth control information and the birth control materials that are generally available are unreliable— those that *are* reliable are not generally available to the women who need them most, the very poor.

The method that *is* reliable and practicable for women of the underprivileged class cannot be bought at the drug store, or learned from printed directions. It must be adapted to the individual by a physician and its use must be carefully taught her. But unfortunately instruction in this method is even now available to only a minority of the women of the destitute classes. In eighteen states there is as yet no birth control clinical service whatever, in the other states the service is totally inadequate. So the families on relief are growing larger year by year, their misery is increasing and relief charges are climbing into the billions. This is the deplorable situation we face.

How much longer will the American people let this state of affairs go on? They could easily put an end to it, if they would. The mother of every family on relief *wants* reliable birth control advice—let us see that she gets it.

This is entirely practicable. All that is needed is that there shall be more doctors who can teach the best method of birth control; more clinics in which they may teach it to the poor; and more social workers who will tell the poor of this help that is available to them.

But the public is waking up to the cruelty and wastefulness of keeping reliable birth control information from those who need it most. Now is the time to put an end to a policy that is a disgrace to our civilization. Now is the time for birth control leagues, national and state, to join forces to see that every woman on relief can get birth control advice.

(Mrs.) F. Robertson Jones.

Birth Control Downward—and Upward

It is an instrument with unlimited potentialities and will play an increasingly large role in guiding human affairs.

In considering the birth control problem, the terms "natural" and "nature" are continually invoked. It may be well to ask, what is "natural" in this field, and how can intelligence guide natural laws.

Population control is a fundamental law of life. It is exercised by nature all along the line, from the lowest species to the highest. Nature controls population through the death rate, and, among the sub-human species, maintains a stationary population by making the death rate equal the birth rate. Man cannot escape control, but, by exercising intelligence, may substitute birth control for death control. We can substitute the human way for the natural way. We can control our numbers by foresight, knowledge, and the findings of science, instead of by deaths, particularly a great number of infant deaths.

Thus far the birth control movement has concerned itself chiefly with limiting the size of the family, in a laudable effort to relieve economic and mental burdens. The need for family limitation persists and will doubtless be permanent. But we must go further.

The movement must be prepared to meet the future. We must stimulate births among the more socially desirable. With the approaching era of stationary or perhaps declining population, it becomes doubly important that every possible assistance be given to families of good stock, who want more children. Birth control clinics of the future should be equipped to give preliminary advice to those who want more, as well as those who want fewer, children.

We must have birth control upward as well as downward. Families wanting children must receive scientific help. Society in the near future, if it becomes necessary, will devise new sanctions and attitudes to provide a stimulus to the birth rate among families that should be larger. The birth control movement must take the lead in this constructive work.

Henry Pratt Fairchild.

The Church and Birth Control*

Despite my very great interest in the birth control movement, I am a bit glad that it did not make greater headway until recent years, for I am the ninth child of a thirteenth child. Of course one should be willing to make great sacrifices for a good cause, but fortunately, retroactive sacrifice of one's existence is not called for.

Still, my interest in the movement does go back a number of years. In my file is a highly prized letter under date of June 15, 1917, from Frederick A. Blossom, written on the stationery of "The Birth Control League of New York" addressed to me at Des Moines, Iowa, where I was at that time pastor. The letter says, "Several newspaper clippings brought us news sometime ago of your interest in birth control. . . May I send greetings and extend the right hand of fellowship. . . I take pleasure in sending you with my compliments a copy of the first issue of the Birth Control Review. . ." The clippings referred to by Mr. Blossom told of my having defended from my pulpit Margaret Sanger when she was having some unpleasant experiences with officers of the law. Well do I remember the utter disgust of one of my parishioners who when asked by another what he thought the minister was driving at, replied, "Why he is advocating abortion." But let it be said to their credit, that no corporate protest was made and that the principle of pulpit freedom was sustained under what must have seemed to the parish at that time rather provocative circumstances.

I kept until recently this copy of the Birth Control Review—Volume 1, Number 1. It is now in the files of the Illinois Birth Control League. The front page announced an article by Margaret Sanger on the question, "Shall She Break the Law?" The article closed with the ringing proclamation: "If she must break the law to establish her right to voluntary motherhood, then the law shall be broken."

Since 1917 there have been many and rapid changes in the life of religion and in the activities of the church. In the early twenties, I had occasion to argue a matter before a committee studying a phase of religious education. The late President Charles W. Eliot was a member of the committee. And in the course of the discussion one of the overseers of Harvard remarked that he had no interest in a type of religious education that produced civic secretaries. Whereupon Dr. Eliot looked straight at his associate and said:

> My dear sir, unless I am badly mistaken, within the next twenty-five or thirty years our understanding of the very nature of religion will undergo a great change.

That change is taking place even more rapidly than President Eliot predicted.

We are in the midst of mighty changes, not only in religion, but also throughout our entire world. All ideas, and symbols are called upon to give an account of themselves. The most basic conceptions, attitudes, convictions, and loyalties are being overhauled and readjusted with an intellectual audacity that would be shocking were it not so spiritually invigorating. Religion is breaking its fetters, feeling new strength, resurveying its fields and extending its boundaries.

Religion is coming to be understood in terms of exploration and discovery, of quest and conquest; as the search to find in the nature of man and the universe the kind of life that is inherently desirable, and the enlistment in its behalf of all instrumentalities, both human and cosmic, that are capable of assisting in its realization. As thus conceived, religion is not founded on any preconceived notion of values. There is no authoritative life-pattern. Religion must now attempt to find in the nature of man and the universe the kind of life that can and should be lived; to find out what may be reasonably expected of man and of nature. This is an extension of religion to coincide with the quest for knowledge and with the application of knowledge to human affairs. This new view reconfirms man in his age-long quest for truth. But, unlike the old, this view regards none of the discoveries of the quest as fixed and final. Where the ancients bowed before mystery, modern religion attempts to understand it.

Today religion does not confine itself to any one type of values. It enlists in its service all values, physical, mental, social and cosmical. It brings to bear upon all human affairs all facts and all values. I am anxious for you who give yourselves devotedly to such worthy causes as the birth control movement to understand and appreciate the fact that religion today brings to mankind a keen consciousness of human responsibility and opportunity in the effort to direct human progress in accord with the newly discovered powers and possibilities of the human race. Whatever else religion may teach today, it teaches that human progress is dependent on human initiative and human direction. Religion today regards man as able rationally and scientifically to control himself, his world, the world of energy, and the world of values for the satisfaction of human desires; and in proper proportions it glorifies these desires. The new understanding of religion bids man to make himself and his world what he will; to reorganize his impulses and his ideology and his social institutions in the light of his ever-increasing achievements; to control his social customs.

In accordance with this trend, the attitude of the church toward the whole problem of sex is changing. Religion is becoming actively interested in the erotic life where for ages the grossest ignorance and credulity, superstition and tyranny have held sway. In the place now occupied by such ignorance and credulity, such superstition and tyranny, the Church today will help you install knowledge and enlightened virtue.

In the past, the attitude of the Church toward sex was a curious mixture of the ancient teaching, "Be fruitful and multiply," on the one hand, and on the other Paul's teaching when he said, "I would that all men were even as myself. . . But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to *burn*."

Too often in the past sex life has been thought of as largely an evil to be tolerated for the purpose of propagation.

But as the church came to terms with science

*Address before Annual Meeting of the American Birth Control League, Jan. 17. 1935, Palmer House, Chicago.

in other fields, it slowly capitulated in the field of sex. Here the church is no longer willing for nature to be uncontrolled by intelligence and scientific techniques.

The old and backward attitude is changing. As evidence of this change, in recent years the following church organizations have gone on record favoring birth control.†

Committee on Marriage and the Home of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

Lambeth Conference of Bishops of the Church of England.

General Council of Congregational and Christian Churches.

Universalist General Convention.

The American Unitarian Association.

Central Conference of American Rabbis.

New York East Conference and other regional sections of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Special Committee of the Women's Problems Group of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends.

General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

"At its 1934 Convention the Y. W. C. A. voted to work for legislation permitting doctors to give birth-control instruction."

And the *Rhythm theory* now making such rapid headway among Catholics, while not a satisfactory method of birth control, is nevertheless a distinct move in the direction of a modern attitude on the matter; for if sex life is ethical apart from propagation, then insistence on natural as distinguished from other scientific methods is an untenable position and will undoubtedly be abandoned in favor of techniques that offer greater safety than can the "safe period."

But important battles are yet to be fought.

The major battle of civilization is that between the intelligent control of world processes on the one hand and, on the other, all forms of determinism, of chance, and of *laissez faire*.

The major battle of ethical progress is that between surrender or conformity to natural processes on the one hand, and, on the other, the control of natural processes for human ends.

The major battle in religion is between those who still regard religion as having to do primarily with transcendent, other-worldly experiences on the one hand, and, on the other, those who regard religion as having to do primarily with human, earthly experiences.

The major cultural, ethical, and religious significance of Birth Control is that it puts the realm of sex on the side of *intelligence, control and human satisfactions.*

The basic importance of birth control is not primarily in its emphasis on the small family system—as important as this is—but on its *principle* of *intelligent control* of life processes.

Important steps of a more practical nature must still be taken, and in these the church can render valuable assistance. Among these steps are the following:

1. Every section of municipal, state and national law that prohibits the dissemination of birth control information and that prohibits the sale of contraceptive devices should be repealed; and in new laws, birth control information and devices should be subject only to such control as is exercised for example by the pure food laws in their field.

2. Health and Social Service departments of the city, the state and the nation should be specifically charged with the duty of disseminating full and authoritative information on the subject of optional parenthood, and also of maintaining inexpensive clinics easy of access.

3. Scientific research should be continued until the present unsatisfactory and clumsy methods of birth control are supplanted by sure, easy and satisfactory means; and also until the day when it is possible for all, as it is now possible for some, to achieve a desired birth painlessly and gloriously instead of as at present in agony and sorrow.

4. And perhaps most important of all, the mind of the public must be so educated that sex and all that pertains thereto can be thought and spoken of with the frankness that now prevails in the fields of dietetics and esthetics, or of ethics and religion.

There are other needful things, but these will keep us busy for a while.

CURTIS W. REESE.

†Birth Control, Its Use and Misuse, by Dorothy Dunbar Bromley. Harper's, N. Y. 1934. P. 304. $2.50.

Religion and Human Sterilization

New Measures Must Overcome Mass Inertia

Sterilization represents a social challenge of such significance that no intelligent person can remain neutral on the subject.

Religion has been defined a thousand times. For our purpose today it may be convenient to define it in terms of social concern—the need of utilizing the mental, moral, physical and spiritual forces of man to make this world a better place to live in for all in order that each might have a completer and a more useful (in some instances a less harmful) life.

Naturally many objections have been raised to sterilization. Every new measure will find objections simply because it is new; mass inertia must be overcome. It may be of interest to know that the Fathers of our Republic, the men who fought against tyranny and were inspired by the slogan, "that all men are born free and equal" and were willing to die for it, themselves held slaves; when they spoke of *men* they used the word not in its generic sense but in the sense of male, for it did not include women, nor did it include any but *white* men and only such white men that *owned property*—about one out of twenty.

There were "objections" also to the abolition of slavery. Many of the Fathers of the Republic felt that it was blasphemous to do away with that institution since there was slavery in the Bible and, therefore, God himself must have sanctioned it. But the fight against slavery won.

Fifty years after the Declaration of Independence a free public school system was still "the distant hope

of reformers"—each word needs underscoring; it was *distant,* it was merely a *hope;* the hope of *reformers.* unmarried people and married people who were childless felt that they should not pay for the education of "other people's children."

There were "objections," lasting until our very day, to the abolition of child labor. Alexander Hamilton, the greatest Secretary of the Treasury, felt that a high tariff was desirable because it would make child labor "extremely profitable."

There were "objections" to the pure food laws. The argument frequently used was that anyone who wasn't sufficiently trained in chemistry to analyze the difference between poor food and pure food should pay the penalty.

There were "objections" to the birth control movement. Now more than eighty per cent of our population admit practicing birth control, even though thirty per cent of our population are forbidden by their church affiliation to practice birth control. All of the churches have now sanctioned birth control with the exception of the Catholic Church. Within the last year the Catholic Church has espoused "The Rhythm Theory" of birth control.

There were "objections" also to the introduction of anesthesia because of the Biblical phrase, "In pain shall women bring forth." It wasn't until someone, as a subterfuge, pointed out that "God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam," which was interpreted as anesthesia, that this blessing for mankind could be introduced. The havoc that can be wrought through misinterpreting a naive legend! If there were "objections" to these measures and to a thousand of others equally as good, it is only natural that there should be objections to something as radical as human sterilization.

Sterilization represents one of many eugenic measures to check the birth rate of the unfit. In Judaism eugenic considerations are not new. In Talmudic times, two thousand years ago, marriages between imbeciles, lepers, epileptics, deaf mutes, the lame, the blind, the consanguineous, and the dementia praecox were prohibited for eugenic reasons. If a couple disobeyed this prohibition when they came home from their honeymoon they were greeted by the rest of the community with a barrel of rotten apples, which were ceremoniously—or rather unceremoniously—squashed before their door, while the community cried in chorus: "Thus shall be done to those who cause the human stock to deteriorate."

Do you recall the story of the romance of Isaac and Rebecca in the Bible? Isaac was to travel from door to door and the maiden who volunteered to give water not only to the men but to the camels, also, was to become his wife. The Talmudic commentary on this simple story was in the form of a *protest,* that even though one were fine enough to have regard to the needs of dumb animals, one might still be eugenically unfit for marriage. If, after the depression, our government insisted that poor stock, financially speaking, should no longer be issued, eugenists are beginning to wonder whether the time has not come to cry halt to the producing of poor stock, humanly speaking. Our government still spends from twenty to twenty-five times as much to teach the farmer how to breed hogs, dogs, and pigs, as it spends to teach parents how to rear children and society to take heed of eugenic considerations.

What is meant by sterilization? There are so many wrong impressions abroad. Sterilization does not call for unsexing an individual or desexing an individual; it is not castration; it is not emasculation; it is not mutilation; it does not interfere with sex functions or sex life in any way save in the ability to reproduce one's kind. In the male we advocate vasectomy, a simple, harmless, comparatively painless operation, which in the hands of a skilled physician, would not even require a general anesthetic and be completed in less than five minutes. It would be less annoying than vaccination and less dangerous than removing the tonsils. There would be no after effects save that for which it was intended, namely, to remove the possibility of procreation. In the female there are various methods, the x-ray, radium, searing, and salpingectomy. We recommend salpingectomy; it has been endorsed by the leading scientists. Let us freely admit that it is a major operation but the statistics in five thousand cases showed three deaths and these due to other causes.

Sterilization has a history. The Mohammedans used it for maintaining their harems, but their method was emasculation. Among ancient peoples the Egyptians, the Syrians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Persians, and the Chinese used it on captives, criminals, and slaves but they utilized castration. The medieval Catholic Church availed itself of mutilation for young boys in order that they might retain their soprano voices for choir purposes. This was forbidden finally by Pope Leo XIII. Strange as it may seem, the Catholic Church is the only church today that has gone on record against sterilization. Pope Pius XI in his encyclical *Casti Connubi* in 1931 condemned it in no uncertain terms. I say this not in criticism but simply as a matter of fact that you are entitled to know. There are no civil laws against sterilization. The first sterilization bill was introduced in Michigan thirty-seven years ago. The first sterilization bill passed in Indiana twenty-seven years ago. Now twenty-seven states of our Union have enacted sterilization laws, and there are others pending. Ten other countries have followed the lead of the United States. Germany has, during the last year, planned for sterilization on a colossal scale.

In the case of a feeble-minded woman in Virginia, Carrie Buck, whose mother before her was feeble minded and whose daughter was also feeble minded, legal action resulted in the various courts of Virginia and the case finally reached the Supreme Court of the United States. Justice Holmes, in a memorable decision in 1927, said:

> We have seen more than once that the public welfare may call upon the best citizens for their lives. It would be strange if it could not call upon those who already sap the strength of the State for these lessers sacrifices, often not felt to be such by those concerned, in order to prevent our being swamped with incompetence. It is better for all the world if, instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime, or to let them starve for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind. The principle that sustains compulsory vaccination is broad enough to cover cutting the Fallopian tubes. *Three generations of imbeciles are enough.*

Who should be sterilized? Those who have hereditary disease and defects and those who are "carriers" of these, even though they themselves do not possess them. Scientists are agreed that among hereditary diseases we are safe to mention the *feeble minded,* the *hereditary epileptic, the insane,* of a schizophrenetic type and the mania-depressive type, and *idiots.* There is no doubt about these in the minds of scientists. There

is some doubt about habitual criminals, criminal morons and chronic alcoholics. I would like to make it as emphatic as possible at this time that the attitude of religion in such matters should be that of modern science, not guess work, not emotionalism, and not because this or that book, however old, or church counsel, however wise, has spoken. *Religion should never precede in such matters but simply follow but should not lag too far behind the findings of scientists.* This is a scientific subject, not primarily a religious one. It is religion in so far as nothing human can be foreign to religion, and religious also, in that religion at its best should teach people to embrace and utilize the discoveries of science that make for a better social order.

Now that I have discussed who should be sterilized, the next question is, why should people be sterilized. People should not be sterilized for purposes of birth control. Scientists agree that contraception is better suited for this purpose. People may be sterilized for therapeutic measures. There are times when even Caesarian deliveries would endanger a woman's life. People may be sterilized for eugenic measures, where feeble mindedness and insanity lead to sex perversions. Even criminals should not be sterilized for punitive motives, but only for the protection of society and for eugenic considerations. If we allow sterilization to be associated with punitive motives and with criminals, many who are in need of sterilization and who would otherwise gladly volunteer for that purpose, would shrink from being classed with criminals. Personally, I advocate voluntary, not the compulsory sterilization, voluntary and under the protection of the law and with the consent of parents or guardians or the state. A recidivist who spends most of his time in jail should not be permitted, upon his free intervals, each time to leave another unfortunate child who will some day arise and curse the very day on which it was born. Possibly the most illuminating and enlightening study of sterilization has been carried on by Gosney and Popence: "Sterilization for Human Betterment—of Six Thousand Operations." I recommend this study to all interested in the subject. This study is thoroughly scientific and reveals the fact that there was almost complete satisfaction on the part of patients, on the part of parents, on the part of relatives, guardians, and the state. The experience that has been gathered in twenty-seven states reveals the fact that except in extreme cases, *voluntary* sterilization is the right thing, since a compulsory measure stirs up unfavorable opposition and also because the overwhelming majority of those who are in need of sterilization volunteer. Morons and degenerates do not want to be bothered with offspring. This is also true of most of the others who should be sterilized. Physicians now are permitted to sterilize patients, but the ethics of their profession naturally would demand caution. Sterilization should be "permissive" and not compulsory. No one should deal with it lightly but caution should not lead to complete inaction.

For many years a number of families that were scientifically studied were followed to prove the rising tide of degeneracy. One was the Kallikak Family. According to the account that was considered scientific, Martin Kallikak, a youthful soldier of the Revolutionary War, met, in a saloon, a feeble-minded girl by whom he became the father of a feeble-minded son. In 1912 there were four hundred and eighty known direct descendants of this temporary union, the majority of whom were illegitimate, or sexually immoral, or confirmed alcoholics, or employees of houses of ill fame, or feeble minded. According to this same account, Martin Kallikak, after the war, married a respectable girl and four hundred and ninety-six direct descendants have been traced in which none of these qualities have bobbed up. This one case of a temporary union has populated the world with some two thousand degenerates and cost the state several million dollars. A similar story has been told of the Hill-Folk family, of the Nam family, and of the Jukes family. Scientists now know that these family histories "are too good to be true" and that the Mendelian law would not reveal such uniformity in degeneracy. Yet there can be no doubt that some degenerates, and possibly many, could have been avoided by the sterilization of this feeble-minded girl.

We know that two factors enter into life—heredity and environment. We also know that frequently the bad environment has caused the very ills that are attributed to bad heredity. One thing is certain, that if one of nature's stepchildren—one of these unfortunate creatures in need of sterilization—should have been sterilized by mistake of heredity, the mistake would, after all, not be so unpardonable because the environment in these cases would have doomed and damned their offspring as much as their heredity. These people would not have been harmed. They would simply have been deprived of the opportunity, which to them is a responsibility of which they would gladly be relieved, of procreating their unfortunate kind and contaminating and deteriorating the human stock. Sociology has its laws no less compelling and imperative than biology.

How decide as to who is to be sterilized? California probably has the best law of the twenty-seven states. More than half of the sterilizations in the United States have taken place in California. In California it is subject to the regulations of the Board of Eugenics, which contains, among others, the Director of the State Department of Institutions, the Director of the State Department of Health, and the Director of the State Department of Public Welfare. Usually these cases of sterilization are voluntary with the consent of the patient, parent, or guardian. Whenever compulsory, the patient has his day in court. How different "paroling" would become, if some of these unfortunates could be at home with their family without causing another imbecile or hereditary epileptic to come into the world.

I do not know why sterilization should be "shocking" to so many people. Nature sterilizes women in middle age; nature sterilizes men at the beginning of old age. Thousands of our finest and best women are sterilized annually because of health considerations. Sterilization, as we are using the term, is an opportunity, rather than a compulsion, that should be given to those in need of it, in order that nature might have fewer stepchildren and the rising tide of degeneracy halted. In 1880 there were in our state hospitals for mental patients sixty-three out of every one hundred thousand of our population. In 1930 there were two hundred and thirty-six out of every one hundred thousand, which means that they may have multiplied by four in fifty years. Of course, figures must be interpreted. Doubtless some of the increase is due to the fact that we are now more concerned with mental patients than we were fifty years ago, but it is also true, as Professor A. E. Wiggam pointed out to the Association of Biological Teachers, that morons multiply

more rapidly than College professors and that imbeciles are more prolific than normal people because they do not sense the responsibility that procreation involves. Unless we grapple seriously with this problem and are willing to do something about it—even though that something cannot cure all of our ills, and even though that something be little more than a step in the right direction—we shall sink to the anti-social attitude of Louis XIV, who said, *"Apres nous la deluge,"* and vindicate the sardonic humor of George Bernard Shaw, who said, "What do I owe to posterity? Posterity never did anything for me." Those who are unwilling to help in movements like sterilization because only the generations yet unborn will reap the full benefit, are like those who enjoy fruit from trees that they did not plant, yet are unwilling to plan for others. Such are anti-social creatures and anti-religious! In war we mow down, like so many blades of grass, the very best human stock; the morons and degenerates are not permitted to go forth. We would, in peace, not mow down nature's stepchildren, but simply prevent their prolific reproduction.

Sterilization has its perils, let there be no doubt about it. Those who act on the subject emotionally rather than intelligently, who would go beyond the scientific facts, are flirting with danger. That is why I emphasized before and want to emphasize again that while religion should never go beyond the scientific facts in this, which is, after all, a scientific problem, it should not lag too far behind. If we err, we must err on the side of conservatism, otherwise we become the apostles of irresponsibility. We must keep the garden of humanity as free from weeds as possible. We must raise the level of humanity above the dregs that pollute and contaminate. We should try to do, as far as possible, for humans what generations have done for cattle. Society, if it remains true to scientific standards, has everything to gain and nothing to lose from sterilization.

They said of one of our great presidents, "We love him for the enemies that he has made." Sterilization must be judged by its enemies as well as its friends. When the Catholic Church says "The family is paramount" and that man should not interfere with the work of God even though he produce a monster, we disagree.

The argument that is frequently used against sterilization is that "we might prevent a genius from being born." Scientifically speaking, geniuses do not come from the eugenically diseased, but even if they did, one might also prevent geniuses from being born by not advocating unmarried mothers. They, too, might produce geniuses. Similar arguments were used against birth control years ago. A thirteenth child, like Benjamin Franklin, would never have been born had his parents practiced birth control. Inasmuch as no socially-minded person would now use that argument against birth control, even for healthy parents with healthy offspring, the use of it for diseased parents with diseased offspring to continue to produce their unfortunate kind is not only anti-social but irreligious.

It is also said that "we know too little as yet." There is but one answer to that. Utilize all that we know; we should not, would not, and dare not go beyond scientific knowledge.

Another argument frequently used against sterilization is that the wrong people would get sterilized. Bertrand Russell, in one of his books, said that "since the morons are in the majority they would doubtless have all the high minded people sterilized." There is no danger of that.

It is also said that "sterilization would be abused." There is nothing that cannot be abused. Eating is abused; most people dig their graves with their knives and forks. The automobile has been abused by the gangster to make a "quick get-away."

It has also been claimed that "sterilization would increase immorality." The truth is that sterilization would make immorality less of a social nuisance.

Every phrase in the language of opposition has been applied to sterilization. Among these is "class legislation." It is not class legislation any more than vaccination is class legislation because if one becomes technical enough there are two classes—those who have been vaccinated and those who haven't, but this, too, is a subterfuge.

Those who oppose sterilization often say that "segregation would be a substitute." It is manifestly impossible to segregate the large numbers whom sterilization could render less harmful.

The argument that "not all the feeble minded and imbeciles could be removed from future generations" but only a fraction of them by sterilization, is not an argument against sterilization but for it. If we can help even in a small way, as religionists and socially-minded creatures, we dare not shirk our duty.

Others again say that "we need morons for the 'dirty jobs.'" This argument is beneath condemnation. It is on a par with those who oppose birth control lest there should not be enough cannon-fodder for the next war.

Those who claim that the problem is overwhelmingly large and that there are not sufficient doctors and hospitals to take care of the work, should be taught the words of the Talmud: "because thou canst not complete the task, thou art not free to neglect it entirely." Recent studies have showed that if all whose teeth needed attention were to take proper care of them, we would need ten times as many dentists as we now have in a profession, usually designated as "overcrowded." We do not shrink from dentistry because so much more ought to be done. The same principle applies to sterilization.

Some have become righteously indignant and say that "sterilization is mutilation." They are ignorant of the process; it leaves no scar or visible sign. Vaccination might mildly be considered such but sterilization, not even by the stretch of the imagination.

For those who argue that it is "contrary to nature," we would answer very simply that the existence of any park or garden is "contrary to nature," otherwise it would be full of weeds and we would weed the garden of humanity. Anyone who goes to a barber does something "contrary to nature." If I were altogether natural I would look like a Smith Brother's Cough Drop advertisement. Every time one visits an optician for glasses one is doing something "contrary to nature." The orthodontist who straightened my children's teeth did something "contrary to nature." The plastic surgeon's work, from that point of view, is "contrary to

nature." Every time we remove a mole from our skin, or drain a swamp, or give insulin to diabetics, or perform a Caesarian operation, or help to masticate our food with the aid of artificial teeth, or remove the appendix, we are doing something which is "contrary to nature."

God helps those who help themselves, and if they don't—God help them!

DR. LOUIS L. MANN,
Rabbi, Chicago Sinai Congregation,
also, Department of Oriental Languages, University of Chicago.

Trumpets on New Horizons

Steam

The goblin hissing at the heart of trade,
The dragon with the cindery iron coat,
The giant with a whistle down his throat
And breath ascending in a smoky braid,
Has thundered round all lands, and been obeyed
Where barges shudder and the great ships float,
And in dark-burrowed mines, and shores remote
Whose charr-lipped factories spread a sulphurous shade.

And we who grovel at the genie's feet
Feel his hot image stamped upon our minds;
The tempest of his sputtering haste and heat
Puffs through our lives, and rattles, jars and blinds,
Till, where the wheeled and clattering mobs compete,
The god that frees us is the god that binds.

STANTON A. COBLENTZ.

Admonition for These Times

(To Any Lad the World Over)

Make haste to go, should the summons come
And the powers that be impose a war;
Obey the rhythmic urge of the drum
As your credulous sires have before.

Demand no reason but only go
To place your youth under ghastly hire;
No need that a soldier really know
Why he fights in a hell of blood and fire.

The lords of the earth alone, my lad,
Need fathom the wherefore and the why;
Let them worry and fret but you be glad
That all you have to do is die.

Make haste to go, O young and brave,
Make haste to go and kill your kind;
It will win you prayers, a wreath for your grave
And a medal or two to leave behind.

ADELAIDE LOVE.

Woman

A slave in many lands today,
A slave through all the past;
A source of men for war to slay,
A burden-bearing caste.

A plaything held in dungeons of sin,
A slave of shameful lust.
Who holds the gilded javelin
That cows her form to dust?

GRACE FRENCH SMITH.

Mercy in the Shadow of Mars

Man who rears a hospital
Also builds a fort!
Kindliness so brittle,
Sympathy so short!

Odd that the ward-erector,
Builder of churches, too:
Man, should crown the spectre,
War, that rewards so few.

Here is suffering muffled,
Here is living sought—
Different where men are shuffled
Whom war and greed have caught!

Churches comfort the stricken;
Hospitals heal the torn.
Past them footsteps quicken,
Following martial horn.

Hurrying toward starvation
(Many the ways to starve!),
Hell of man's own creation
Grimmer than sickness can carve.

Hospitals hurt for mending,
Not like grenades and guns! . .
Robbing the healers, we're spending
Money for murdering sons.

RALPH CHEYNEY.

The Study Table

Two Pacifist Books

Miss La Motte's book* has had a curious and significant history. The chapters, or sketches, were written in 1915 and 1916, when the author was in a French military field hospital, a few miles behind the lines in Belgium. Published in the autumn of 1916, the little volume was suppressed in the summer of 1918 when America was in the full rush of the War. The author tells us that "from its first appearance, this small book was kept out of England and France." Now, when we are sick of war, and disillusioned with the Great War, and eager for peace, the book is published in a new edition. But if war should come tomorrow, it would be suppressed more quickly than before. Truth is invariably the first casualty of conflict.

It is doubtful if it is exactly accurate to call this work a pacifist book. For Miss La Motte is not concerned with arguing against or denouncing war. She is not interested—in these pages, at least—in proving any proposition of either war or peace. She went to the front promptly enough in 1915, to do her bit for the Allies as a military nurse. She recognizes even now that war may be "superb," and has its "noble side." But "there are many people," she says, "to write of the noble side, the heroic side, the exalted side of war. I must write of what I have seen, the other side, the backwash."

This "other side, the backwash" of war, as it sweeps through hospital and dressing station, is the content of this book. It is a terrible picture—impressive, if you can stand it—like some of these photographs of war, so horrible as to stain the mind of the observer forever. The wounds, the blood, the cries, the groans, the maimed faces and torn bodies, are all presented without disguise, and as the mere setting, so to speak, of other and more ghastly things. We don't know how Miss La Motte took these hospital scenes in the beginning, but it is obvious enough that she was soon steeled to it

*"The Backwash of the War," by Ellen N. La Motte. Published by G. P. Putnam's Sons. $1.50.

all, and thus sharpened to penetrate to the deeper realities beneath.

Here behind the front, and far away from the parade-ground, there is no glory or heroism in this war business any longer. Torn bodies are but the symbols of torn souls. Simple, unspoiled men, snatched away from all the natural and wholesome experiences of life, plunged into terror and then suddenly into unspeakable agony, become childish, petulant, cowardly, supremely selfish, and utterly lustful and degraded. In these wounded soldiers, these overworked orderlies, these routine officers, even these nurses and surgeons, human nature is suddenly seen at its worst. The boredom of war, its dirt and filth, its hypocrisy and dishonesty, its sheer bestiality—all work their havoc upon souls too weak, too dazed, too terribly injured, to resist and therewith preserve the elements of manhood. Miss La Motte herself is touched with disillusionment and cynicism—with no sound passion left within her, perhaps, save hatred of this vile obscenity, and a high resolve to expose its indecency to the world's stark gaze. Hers is an amazing achievement in this book—loathing in every line, and yet this loathing never dimming her clarity of vision nor quenching her pity for the victims of belligerent governments. Incidentally the sketches have not infrequently a high literary value. And there are quick dramatic endings which O. Henry might envy.

The quality of literature is not secondary but dominant in Milne's masterpiece.† Here is a pacifist document in the highest sense of the word—a frontal attack upon war by a man who has had his experience at the front, and now, in the full flower of his successful authorship, turns his art into a weapon to smite this "sum of all villainies." What makes this book notable, apart from its literary worth, are two extraordinary qualities not always found in pacifist writings.

The first is an upright, downright, forthright repudiation of war on moral grounds. War is wrong, says Milne—wrong as cruelty to children is wrong, as slavery and the burning of heretics are wrong, as the exploitation of the poor is wrong, and the corruption of the innocent. He also thinks, as other men think, that war is silly, disastrous, horrible, expensive. But the only thing that counts is that it is *wrong!* "I think that war is the ultimate expression of man's wickedness," says Milne, and therefore, he will have nothing to do with it. No man can properly be asked by government to sin, or will be asked by God. So men need not go to war! This is the attitude taken by the author at the start, and held by him consistently to the end. Nothing more refreshing has come to our attention in years.

The second quality of this book is a certain hard, razor-edged common sense applied to every phase of the war argument. One after another, Milne takes up the questions of national honor, national pride, military efficiency, the glory of fighting and dying, and searches them with the relentless probe of his ruthless reason. The result is altogether the most devastating disruption of the war delusion that we have ever seen. There is something almost terrible in the calm, cool way he tears into shreds the finest arguments of the war-mongers. It's like a process of vivisection, with the helpless militarist left raw and bleeding to our inspection. If there was ever any slightest suspicion left in our mind that anything could be said for war, that suspicion has now gone forever. Milne has simply swept things clean!

It is in its ruthless portrayal of the war myth that this book is so strong. In its discussion of practical remedies—what to do—it is not so strong. Milne is quite right, of course, when he says, "If a few important people thought as I do: if Ramsay MacDonald were Milne, and Stalin were Milne, and Hitler were Milne—if Beaverbrook, and Rothermer, and the proprietors of fifty chosen newspapers in Europe were Milne, there would be no more war in Europe. . . . War is something of man's own fostering, and if all mankind renounces it, then it is no longer there." Milne proposes in this volume an elaborate program of renunciation. But the situation is not so simple as that! Man is caught in a political and economic tangle which cannot be unravelled by any mere gesture of the imagination. Statesmanship of the highest order is challenged to get humanity out of this dilemma. The right mind, however, is a requisite of such statesmanship, and Milne in this book has done more than any other pacifist writer to create this right mind. For such service he should be granted the Nobel Prize. Perhaps, after another twenty years, this book, "Peace With Honor," will win the recognition just now granted to Norman Angell's "The Great Illusion."

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

†"Peace With Honor," by A. A. Milne. Published by E. P. Dutton & Co. $2.00.

Civil War on the Spanish Main

If consistent and enthusiastic readers of Masefield have come to consider an outstanding book from him each year as a part of their birthright, his latest, "The Taking of the Gry,"* will be no disappointment. Here is a tale of civil war among the banana republics, which, if it lack the *picaresque* quality of "Sard Harker" or the sea-salty flavor of "The Bird of Dawning," is none the less readable; and it possesses a certain audacious, youthful adventuresomeness which gives it a quality all its own.

It is the rather short and simple story of the revolt of the Santa Anna navy against its president who favored, for mercenary reasons, annexation to the neighboring republic of Santa Barbara; but more precisely, it is the record of the reseizure of the ship "Gry," loaded with contraband for the rebels, which had been betrayed into the hands of the Santa Barbarans. Charles Tarlton, a sailor-of-fortune, and Teniente Bronnay of the rebel navy whisk the "Gry" away at night from beneath the very noses of the foe, towing it out with a tug through the difficult and dangerous reaches of "Drake's Channel."

There are, however, a few humorous anachronisms which ought to be called to Mr. Masefield's attention. He definitely sets the date of his tale as 1911, yet he writes "they brought her (the "Gry") round, head to sea, between a submarine depot ship and a seaplane carrier;" and "they shipped me back to Santa Barbara by night-flying aeroplane over the frontier." And when he gives to Santa Anna, "it has a coast of four hundred miles, and no great depth," a navy con-

*"The Taking of the Gry," by John Masefield. Published by Macmillan. 1934.

sisting of four destroyers, six unarmored cruisers, three armored cruisers, and seven dispatch ships he goes beyond the limit of credulity and provokes only a good laugh.

Nevertheless, it is very English, very Masefield, and three or four hours spent with it will refresh one as happily as the breath of a salt breeze.

LYLE CORS.

Correspondence

The Fate of Innnocent Investors

The electric power companies and other opponents of public ownership have for a long time contended that industries operated by government are inefficient and uneconomical. It would seem that those making this claim would be glad to prove it through competition with industries operated by government. On the contrary, they apparently are willing to resort to almost anything to avoid such competition.

No sooner had the government undertaken power projects in the Tennessee valley and elsewhere than a cry went up that the private power companies in adjacent territory were threatened with ruinous competition and that thousands of widows and orphans whose savings were invested in the securities of these companies would be impoverished through the shrinkage in the value of their investments.

On a similar plea the attempt is being made to enlist colleges and churches in the crusade against public ownership. A serious problem is presented because numerous religious educational institutions have endowment funds invested in the securities of public utility corporations which, it is now contended, are threatened with ruin through government competition. Dr. Hugh S. Magill, who recently resigned his position as secretary of the International Council of Religious Education and has become president of the American Federation of Utility Investors, gives this alarmist view of what may happen from the spread of public ownership: "Philanthropy will become a thing of the past; colleges will become less effective through lack of support; and finally the church itself may slowly perish from financial starvation."

Everyone should keep in mind that the slump in securities took place a considerable while before there was a threat of serious government competition in the power industry. Remember also that there was no valid reason for a disastrous slump in power securities, for production and rates were maintained by this industry through the depression at near their former levels. It was not government competition but dishonest financing of the private power companies that brought most of the losses to innocent investors.

I have in mind one huge power concern that, according to a recent Federal Trade commission report, unloaded more than a billion dollars of inflated stock on the public in the late twenties. After the market crash the president of the corporation saw this stock settle down to near two per cent of its former price. Even this bargain price was no inducement to him to repurchase; he invested his garnered millions in Florida real estate.

In the recently enacted legislation relating to securities the Federal government has sought earnestly to establish safeguards for investors. But there are no substitutes for insight and caution. So long as we maintain the profit system we are pretty certain to have boom periods when many kinds of investments will prove alluring, and we will have depressions that will sift out real values from the fictitious.

We may respect the sincerity of Dr. Magill and others in their concern for the interests they represent. But there is no sound reason to expect citizens of the United States to continue to pay excessive rates for electric power—even if we could be assured that such a course would some day give real value to stocks which in many instances have had only speculative value.

F. S. KINDER.

Real Relief for Real Estate

Editor of UNITY:

In a conference of housing experts held in Brookline a short time ago, Edward T. Hartman, consultant on zoning and planning for the State of Massachusetts, placed the responsibility for slum problems where it belongs—on the shoulders of real estate speculators. This fact is generally understood, we have object lessons in abundance—but this simple technic by which to remove the handcuffs from business and labor is not so clearly seen. Mr. Hartman called the attention of the conference to the Pittsburgh graded tax plan, operative since 1914, when a reduction on building assessments started on its way. In January, 1927, the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette* said, editorially: "Now the builders are encouraged; improvements are taxed just half the rate levied on vacant land. . . . Also no personal property taxes are levied here for city purposes. . . . ideas once thought radical and impractical come gradually into general acceptance."

The Pittsburgh *Press* says, editorially: ". . . a progressive law like Pittsburgh's, removing the tax burden from buildings . . . putting it increasingly on land, is certain to be opposed by a certain class . . . the extension of such legislation must be secured by virtue of enlightened public opinion demanding what is clearly in the interest of the average business man and of the public in general." Thus we learn that the small home owner is "in pocket," for their improvements greatly exceed the site value. Every resident is either a tenant or a home owner; more than 90 per cent have small incomes and cannot "pass on their taxes," whether paid directly by the owner to the city, or by the tenant in his rent to the owner. There is "no such person" as a non-taxpayer, only dense economic illiteracy leads one to say that they escape taxes because they "own no property." The extension of this interesting adventure in municipal taxation is now hoped for, as the present mayor, William N. McNair, advocates the five-to-one plan—a ratio of five on land values to one on buildings. He has spent years of his life in the effort to set his city beyond social reproach, the legislature should be of equal mind to pass the bill. The crudity, called the sales tax, will get short shrift when the impecunious mass of society, from whom the natural privileges are withheld, see the benefit of the Pittsburgh plan.

In all "trick" taxation the unprosperous will find no actual relief, they will pay the tax in a new guise. May it be the pride of the great State of Pennsylvania in days to come that the venerated Liberty Bell gave

tongue to the glad tidings of the death of economic servitude! WINIFRED B. COSSETTE.

Cambridge, Mass.

Must Have Unity

Editor of UNITY:

I've just sent off a renewal of my subscription to UNITY. I gave it up for a year from motives of economy, but the other day was reading some old numbers and felt that I could not do without it any longer. With no paper have I ever been in such total sympathy as I am with beloved UNITY.

(Mrs.) EMMA A. CYRUS.

Quincy, Ill.

The Field

(*Continued from page* 222)

cycle. As the president of the District of Columbia Medical Society reminds us, this method may be employed by any misguided girl parked in an automobile on any lonely road; whereas the recommended clinical method requires personal examination by a qualified physician and the preparation, time, and place which are best secured by married life.

The Catholic Church, if it liked, might justify its approval of the "sterile period" method of birth control on the ground that it doesn't work. At least it may be said unhesitatingly that it doesn't work as well as the recommended clinical method; first, because the indicated period of abstinence is not likely to be observed except by exceptionally well-disciplined people; second, because the period of relative sterility cannot be accurately determined.

Significantly, the earlier Catholic argument that contraception would result in underpopulation is abandoned in "The Rhythm." It is admitted that economic and social conditions are the determining controls of population growth, regardless of the means that may be employed. The democratic practice of contraception replaces more wasteful and disorganizing means of population control such as abortion, infanticide, celibacy, sex irregularities, needless infant and maternal mortality and war.

The widespread practice of contraception has enabled Holland to increase her population at a faster rate than any country in the world with a comparatively high standard of living. Moreover, Dr. William F. Ogburn and Dr. Warren S. Thompson, two distinguished members of the President's Committee on Social Trends, have discovered that birth control increases the proportion of married couples with respect to the total population.

The case for birth control is proved and, with 16,000,000 persons on relief and 10,600,000 wage earners unemployed, the need for birth control is overwhelming. These families have a birth rate 48 per cent higher than their more fortunate neighbors. Dr. Raymond Pearl of Johns Hopkins, in an exhaustive study for the Milbank Foundation, reaches the conclusion that "the national policy of prohibiting the free dissemination of accurate scientific information about birth control methods is adding definitely and measurably to the difficulty of the problem of poverty and unemployed with which our children and grandchildren will have to deal."

The present federal laws against birth control tie the hands of the medical profession and drive the distribution of contraceptives underground; the bootlegging of fake methods makes for tragedy and endangers public health. There are approximately 1,000,000 abortions in this country each year; 30,000 women die as a result of pregnancy or abortion, and 200,000 infants die or are born dead.

To the challenge of these ominous figures, the Catholic Church has answered with a new and indefensible evasion. Congress must return a better answer than that next fall. It must pass the birth-control bill.

—*The Nation.*

War Resistance Frightens France

A laconic report, eight lines in length, appearing in the New York *Times* on January 3, brought to a new and dramatic phase one of the most courageous struggles for peace ever waged against odds by a sacrificial group of idealists. Dated at Paris, the dispatch read:

> A civil tribunal, acting on the request of the government, today ordered the dissolution of the French Conscientious Objectors League in an effort to suppress its opposition to compulsory military service. The court declared the League's aims "illegal."

France, whose people in their hearts abhor war, has nevertheless been overwhelmingly a military power. Up to 1914 from the War of 1870 the cry of "revenge" rang through the halls of diplomacy. An invaded nation, after the World War it was virtually impossible to find in the entire country any war resisters of the sort who, in Great Britain, the United States, Germany, Switzerland, the Scandinavian lands and other countries, were banding together to offer united resistance against new war and war preparedness. Time, however, brought a change and gradually one young man after another came forward to announce his unwillingness to enter into the military machine.

As in most cases, the emergence of the new movement disturbed military circles very little. The few persistent conscientious objectors were imprisoned, but on the whole well treated and often released after brief terms. The government's inclination seemed to be one of lenience toward these "queer specimens" so hard for the conventional military mind to understand. But two factors coincided to dissipate the toleration and intensify the differences involved in the two points of view. For one thing, the war resistance movement grew with surprising speed, drawing into its ranks intellectuals such as Victor Marguéritte, the novelist and former army officer; school teachers in radical anti-war trade unions; a few devoted philosophical nonviolent anarchists of high personal character; and an ever-increasing number of Protestants and Catholic Christians. The Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Society of Friends, the War Resisters' International, and various other international organizations built up small yet influential movements.

A second circumstance was not wanting, however, when Hitler rose to power in Germany, denounced in effect the post-war treaties, and defiantly began to re-arm. France's own creation—because the intransigence of French policy was a major factor in Hitler's ascendancy—the menace of Nazi Germany was the signal for vigorous persecution of war resisters. In January, 1933, a secret circular was sent out by

the Minister of the Interior to all regional authorities ordering an inquiry into pacifist activity and threatening severe punishment. Aroused by rumors of an attempt in the Chamber of Deputies to legalize alternative, or civil, service (as in Sweden, Denmark and Holland, for example), the authorities began an effort to disband through legal process the most obviously challenging group —the "réfractaires" or "recalcitrants." When the great National Congress of Teachers in September, 1933, adopted a war resistance attitude, the government for the first time fully comprehended the formidable extent of the radical anti-war movement and moved swiftly to crush it. The "refractaires" fought on, some winning concessions by hunger strikes. But pacifist teachers were dismissed here and there, long sentences were imposed on objectors, violent and militaristic bands of youth were encouraged to break up peace meetings, editors of pacifist papers were prosecuted. The dissolution of the League of Conscientious Objectors on January 2 last is the climax of this official crusade.

By no means, however, is the issue settled. At the Senate Tribunal a few years ago, a Deputy asserted that 132,000 Frenchmen of the mobilizable class (that is, between twenty and fifty years old) in one way or another have evaded submission to military obligations.

"It is the end of liberty in France," writes one of the war resistance leaders. "It is the beginning of a military dictatorship. But our comrades are resolved to struggle on, no matter how unequal the fight may be. They place themselves under the protection of world opinion. Let us rise up with all our might in every country against militarism, or militarism will annihilate us all."

—*World Events.*

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